

AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Air Commandos

USAF Small UAS Lead Command Update & Focus



**Major James “Rainman Hoffman
Chief, AFSOC/SUAS Technology**

August 09

**The Worst Nightmare of
America’s Worst Enemies**



Major James "Rainman" Hoffman

- B.A Math/Physics – TCU (1989), MAS Ops Mngmt - Embry-Riddle (2000)
- Predator Pilot - USAF Initial Cadre/Indian Springs Aux Field (1996-1999)
- Deployed to Bosnia - Predator (OP JOINT ENDEAVOR/1997)
- First UAS Pilot at ACC HQ (DR) - Led Pred/Hellfire Integration (2001)
- Chief, UAS Operations (AFCENT HQ) – OP IRAQI FREEDOM (2004-8)
- Lead U.S. Advisor - Italian Predator Deployment (Special Forces)
- Deputy Commander, ROVER Team - JTF Katrina/New Orleans (2005)
- Chief, SUAS Test and Technology Branch (AFSOC HQ) - Present



Air Power Video



SUAS Truths

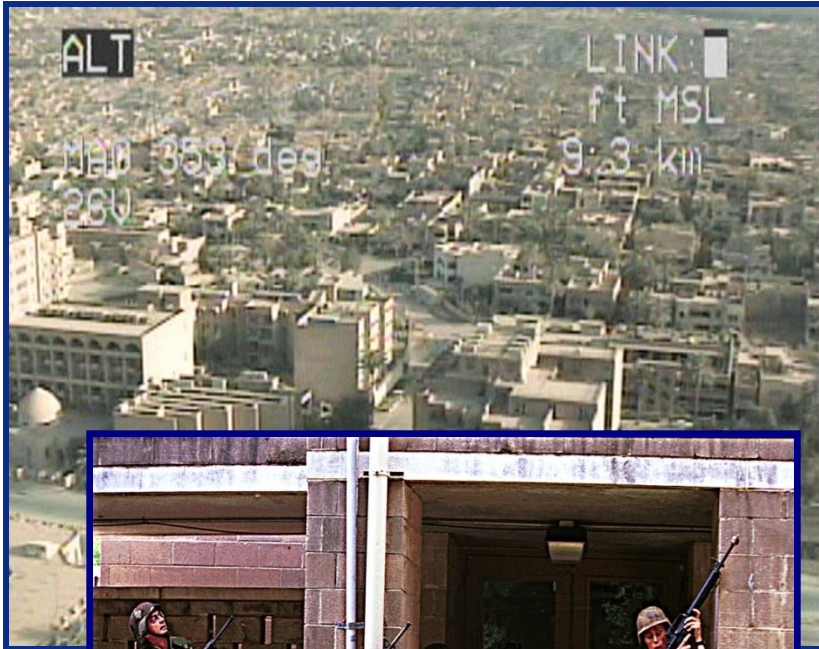


- Appetite for ‘eyes over the hill’ or ‘eyes around the corner’ insatiable
- Airman on the battlefield require capabilities provided by small UAS
- SUAS augment and enhance other AF ISR and combat capabilities
- SUAS technology refresh is 2-3 years
- SUAS are not CAPs
- SUAS are not Toys
- Most Small UAS programs have joint users, not joint developers
- AFSOC has expertise and is small UAS lead for both AF and SOCOM
- Small UASs feed other AF/SOF mission sets – precision targeting, airbase security, future gunship, air expeditionary forces
- SUAS currently has one PE, the need is 3: Group I, Group II, Group III

Small UAS are integral to AF's Family of Systems



Urban Close Air Support





AFSOC SUAS Challenges



- **Mission Management (Multi-Aircraft Control)**
- **Doctrine (Centralized Control)**
- **Present Culture (Acceptance)**
- **Manning Problem (#1 Priority)**

Who's going to fly these critters?



AFSOC SUAS Challenges



- **Sensor Operators – initially (Pred, AC-130, etc.)**
- **Stand-up of 2 SUAS Squadrons – FY 10**
- **Proliferation of Air-Launched SUAS**
- **Stand-up of Choctaw SUAS Joint Training Facility**



SUAS Training Facility Update

Choctaw Airfield



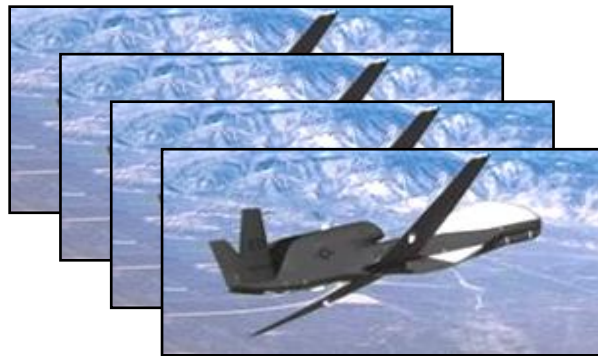
- **One Stop Shop for the USAF and SOF warfighters (joint)**
 - **Consolidated, standardized, organic cadre for all platforms**
 - **Recruit, train and retain organic ops/mx training cadre**
 - **Academic, BQT, IQT, MQT and pre-deployment**
 - **Lead Command/Component responsibilities fulfilled**
 - **Maintain and grow AFSOC/SOCOM corporate knowledge**
 - **Avoids maintaining multiple training contracts and locations**
 - **Less costly in long run—builds local cadre of experts**
 - **Facilities and large runways already exist**
 - **Local ATC personnel familiar with UAS ops**
 - **Class D COA**
 - **Proximity to western Eglin restricted airspace**
 - **Initial Training Class Start Date: 1 Oct 09**



Critical Mission Management Technologies



Enable Operator Situation Awareness



Develop On-Board Autonomy

Integrate Manned-Unmanned



Integrate Human Factors with Autonomous Software





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Questions

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